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Information Bulletin

Grade 3 English Language Arts
1994-96

This document was written primarily for:

Students	✓
Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Parents	
General Audience	
Others	✓ Superintendents

This bulletin contains general information about the Achievement Testing Program and information specific to the Grade 3 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Additional copies of the bulletin may be made as needed.

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October 1994

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General Information

The Achievement Testing Program provides teachers, parents, students, school administrators, Alberta Education, and the public with information about what students know and can do in relation to provincial standards. Group results are reported at school, district, and provincial levels to improve learning opportunities for students.

The assessments are administered in two subject areas at Grade 3—language arts and mathematics—and in four subject areas at grades 6 and 9—language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

The assessments are based on provincial standards, which reflect important learnings in the subject areas listed above. Classroom teachers from across the province are extensively involved in developing and field testing the assessment instruments.

Administering the Assessment

Information about the nature of the provincial assessments as well as their administration to special-needs students can be found in the *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program*, which has been mailed to all superintendents and principals.

Schedule

The written-response component of English and French Language Arts must be administered during the first week of June. The machine-scorable component of all achievement tests must be administered during the last two weeks of June. Specific information regarding scheduling is provided in the current *General Information Bulletin*.

To minimize any risks to security, we recommend that all students complete the test on the same day. Students who are absent when the tests are administered and who return to school by the end of the school year must write the tests upon their return. By scheduling the tests early in the administration period, schools can ensure that most, if not all, absentees are tested. The principal is responsible for ensuring the security of the tests.

Beginning in 1995, the tests that will be administered each year are:

Grade 3

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing and Part B: Reading*)
Mathematics (English and French forms)

Grade 6

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing and Part B: Reading*)
Mathematics (English and French forms)
Social Studies (English and French forms)
Science (English and French forms)
Français 6^e Année (*Partie A: Production écrite and Partie B: Lecture*)

Grade 9

English Language Arts (*Part A: Writing and Part B: Reading*)
Mathematics (English and French forms)
Social Studies (English and French forms)
Science (English and French forms)
Français 9^e Année (*Partie A: Production écrite and Partie B: Lecture*)

Students in French Language Programs

Beginning in June 1995, all students in Francophone and French Immersion programs must write the French form of the achievement tests. Alberta Education will send enrollment forms to schools by February requesting an indication of how many English or French tests are required. These forms must be returned through jurisdiction offices by mid-March.

Reporting the Results

Each school jurisdiction will receive a district report and school reports for their students' achievement, as well as guidelines for interpreting these results in relation to provincial standards.

To facilitate reflection on school programs, we expect that results will be shared with all school staffs (not just teachers of grades 3, 6, and 9), as well as with parents and the community.

Individual student profiles will be sent to the school that the student will attend in September. We also expect that these reports will be shared with parents.

Provincial results will be made public in September. A detailed *Achievement Testing Program Provincial Report* is published annually.

Broadened Assessment Initiatives

The Student Evaluation Branch has developed additional instruments to collect a broader base of information about what students know and can do than achievement tests themselves can provide. These instruments will be administered to a provincial sample of students in all subjects on a rotating basis:

Grade 3

- 1995 •“whole book” performance-based assessment in language arts
- 1996 •problem-solving activities in mathematics
- 1997 •“whole book” performance-based assessment in language arts
- 1998 •problem-solving activities in mathematics

Grade 6

- 1995 •problem-solving activities in mathematics
- 1996 •“whole book” performance-based assessment in language arts

- 1997 •problem-solving and decision-making activities in social studies
- 1998 •performance tasks in science

Grade 9

- 1995 •problem-solving and decision-making activities in social studies
- 1996 •problem-solving activities in mathematics
- 1997 •performance tasks in science
- 1998 •performance tasks in language arts

Description of the Language Arts Assessment Standards

The provincial standards are the basis upon which we assess how well students are doing in reading and writing by the end of Grade 3. These standards reflect the essential learnings that all Alberta students are expected to achieve. Provincial standards are useful, therefore, for assessing Grade 3 students in all types of school programs—public, private, and home education.

Purpose of Assessment Standards

These statements describe what is expected of Grade 3 students who are meeting the *acceptable standard* or the *standard of excellence* on independent work at the end of the Grade 3 Language Arts program. These statements represent the standards against which student achievement will be measured. By comparing actual results to expected provincial standards, decisions can be made about whether achievement is in fact “good enough.”

Acceptable Standard

Writing

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* for writing in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to be able to retell a series of connected personal experiences as a narrative and to tell stories from their own perspective. They should be able to use narrative formats on their own. They are able to use a writing style that generally holds the reader's interest.

Students meeting the *acceptable standard* are expected to use relevant but general details and/or ideas in their writing. They are expected to focus the writing on the important ideas related to a topic and to arrange those ideas in a discernible order. They are expected to provide a beginning and an ending that are connected to the ideas presented in the piece. They are also expected to be able to compose stories following a basic story structure.

The expectation is that students meeting the *acceptable standard* experiment with words and sentence structures to express their ideas and experiences. They are expected to use words and expressions that are clear, although general.

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* for writing in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to use complete sentences, with correct capitalization and end punctuation, most of the time. They are expected to be able to spell many familiar words correctly and unfamiliar words phonetically.

Reading

Students who meet the *acceptable standard* for reading in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to read and understand a variety of types of fiction and non-fiction materials that are commonly found in Grade 3

classrooms. They are expected to be able to use the features of narrative/poetic and informational text to aid understanding. They should be able to use their own prior experiences, knowledge of language, as well as context clues in order to make meaning from text. They are expected to be able to recognize explicit relationships between events and characters in a story. To meet the *acceptable standard*, students are expected to explore print and non-print sources to extend knowledge, retell key details or important ideas, and draw conclusions.

Standard of Excellence

Writing

Students who meet the *standard of excellence* for writing in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to comfortably retell a series of connected experiences as a narrative and to tell stories from their own perspective or from another young child's perspective. The expectation is that they are able to experiment with a variety of narrative formats. They are expected to express a unique experience and their own personality through their choice of topic, characters, actions, and specific language, using a style which captivates and holds the reader's interest.

To meet the *standard of excellence*, students are expected to use specific details and/or ideas that are appropriate for achieving the purpose of the writing. They are expected to focus the writing on the important ideas related to a topic, and arrange them in a logical sequence without gaps in the presentation of information. They are expected to begin their writing in an interesting manner and to draw it to a conclusion that is related to the focus of the piece. They should be able to compose stories that incorporate setting, problem, and external responses of the main characters

and resolution. They are also able to experiment with dialogue in their writing.

The expectation is that students meeting the *standard of excellence* experiment with words and sentence structures to express ideas and experiences. They are expected to show control and variation in the use of sentence structure and to choose specific words to create desired effects.

Students who meet the *standard of excellence* for writing in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to correctly use capital letters, periods, and question and exclamation marks. They are expected to be able to produce correct spellings for frequently used words and apply their knowledge of common spelling patterns correctly when spelling unfamiliar words.

Reading

Students who meet the *standard of excellence* for reading in Grade 3 Language Arts are expected to read and clearly understand an increasing variety of genres, including those that are not the usual story form. They are expected to be able to use their understanding of the organizational structure and presentation of narrative/poetic and informational text to assist them as readers. They should be able to draw on prior experiences, knowledge of language, and context clues in order to make meaning from text. They are expected to be able to understand explicit as well as implicit relationships between events and characters in a story. To meet the *standard of excellence*, students are expected to explore print and non-print sources to extend knowledge, and to synthesize information and draw conclusions or make judgements.

Grade 3 Language Arts Assessment

The Grade 3 Language Arts Assessment consists of four components:

- *Part A: Writing* consists of one writing assignment to be given during a period totalling approximately 70 minutes, preferably the 20-minute period directly preceding recess and the 50-minute period directly following recess. Included in the total period is time for discussion, planning, drafting, and revising.
- *Part B: Reading*, to be administered during a 60-minute period, consists of 40 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and visual media. The booklet for *Part B: Reading* contains both the reading selections and the questions. Answers are to be recorded in the test booklet.

Additional time of approximately 30 minutes may be provided for students to complete each part.

Students may NOT use a dictionary when completing either Part A or Part B.

- *Performance-Based Component* will be completed by a provincial sample of Grade 3 students (to be administered in 1995).
- *Learning Contexts Survey* will be completed by a provincial sample of Grade 3 teachers and students (to be administered in 1995).

Part A: Writing

For *Part A: Writing*, students will be given a writing prompt and a picture and will be allowed to choose the format that will best fit their approach to the prompt (narrative, letter, diary/journal entries, etc.). The

person who administers the test will read the instructions and the story prompt aloud to the students.

Students will be given time to discuss the prompt with classmates in groups of two to four children, or to think alone about it, and to plan their response before beginning to write.

The booklet for *Part A: Writing* includes a

page for ideas/planning, followed by lined pages for writing.

The writing blueprint is followed by a sample assignment for classroom use. It illustrates the kind of writing prompt that will appear on the assessment.

Scoring guides follow on pages 9 to 13. Teachers should discuss the sample assignment with their students.

Part A: Blueprint

Reporting Category	Description of Writing Assignment	Standards
*Content (selecting ideas and details to achieve a purpose) Events and/or actions should be plausible within the context established by the writer. The student should be able to select appropriate details to describe events and characters, and their actions.	The writing assignment follows a picture and a writing prompt that will be read aloud to students. The assignment allows the student to select the format that would best fit his/her approach to the prompt.	The student's achievement in each reporting category will be described according to the following standard statements: Meets the standard of excellence Approaches the standard of excellence Clearly meets the acceptable standard Does not clearly meet the acceptable standard Clearly below the acceptable standard INS insufficient
*Organization (organizing ideas and details into a coherent whole) The student should be able to organize ideas, events, and details in a coherent sequence.		
Sentence Structure (structuring sentences effectively) The student should be able to use a variety of sentence types and structures appropriately.		
Vocabulary (selecting and using words and expressions correctly and effectively) The student should be able to use words and expressions appropriately and effectively.		
Conventions (using the conventions of written language correctly and effectively) The student should be able to communicate clearly by adhering to appropriate spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.		

*These categories are weighted to be worth twice as much as each of the others.

Marking

Beginning in June 1995, classroom teachers will be able to mark students' writing, using the scoring guide in this bulletin, before returning materials to Alberta Education. Samples of students' writing that exemplify the scoring criteria will also be provided to support local marking.

Marks awarded locally will be submitted to Alberta Education and used as the first reading of a student's response. The papers will then be marked centrally by Alberta Education as the second reading. Discrepancies will be adjudicated by a third reading, which will determine the final mark that a paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported.

All papers will be marked in Edmonton in July. Group leaders will meet prior to the marking session. Markers will be Grade 3 teachers selected from those whom superintendents have recommended as markers to the Student Evaluation Branch. To qualify for recommendation by a superintendent, a prospective marker must be currently teaching Grade 3 Language Arts, have taught it for at least two years, have a permanent Alberta teaching certificate, and be employed by a school jurisdiction at the time of marking.

The branch will contact superintendents in the spring for their recommendations of markers. The approximately 150 Grade 3 teachers selected will reflect proportional representation from the various regions of Alberta. Markers will be contacted in May. The list of markers will be finalized no later than June 15.

Confirming Standards

Confirming standards is a process in which some teachers who are selected for marking are asked to make judgements about the achievement test to answer the question of whether province-wide performance is good enough. For more information on the confirming standards process, refer to the *Achievement Testing Program Provincial Report, June 1993 Administration*. For information on the selection of teachers for participation in the confirming standards process, refer to the current *General Information Bulletin, Achievement Testing Program*.

Sample Writing Assignment

The sample assignment and instructions that follow are similar in format and content to those that will be presented on the Grade 3 Language Arts Achievement Test.

Grade 3 Achievement Test

English Language Arts

Part A: Writing

To The Teacher

Please read the instructions and story starter aloud to your students.

Description

- In this test, you are asked to choose the kind of writing (story, letter, diary/journal entries) that will allow you to show your best writing.
- You will have 10 minutes for planning, 10 minutes for discussion, and 50 minutes to complete your writing.

Instructions

- Your teacher will ask you to plan your writing in whatever way you choose (web, list, pictures, etc.).
- You will have 10 minutes to talk with your classmates about the writing activity or to think alone about it.
- You will then have 10 minutes to do your planning.
- When you are doing your writing, print or write as neatly as you can.
- When you have finished, **check your work carefully** and correct any mistakes.

Assignment

Pretend that you are walking with a friend when suddenly a wonderful animal appears. This is no ordinary animal! Write about the adventure that the three of you have together.



Reporting Category: Content

When marking **Content** appropriate for Grade Level 3 writing, the marker should consider the

- relationship between events, actions, and the context established by the writer
- specificity of detail
- reader/writer relationship

Meets the Standard of Excellence	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events, actions, and/or ideas are consistently appropriate for the context established by the writer.• Details are specific and consistently effective.• The writing captivates and holds the reader's interest.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Events, actions, and/or ideas are appropriate for the context established by the writer.• Details are specific and generally effective.• The writing engages and generally holds the reader's interest.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The majority of the events, actions, and/or ideas are appropriate for the context established by the writer.• Details are general and may be predictable but are appropriate.• The writing generally holds the reader's attention.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some of the events, actions, and/or ideas are appropriate for the context established by the writer.• Details are few and/or may be repetitive.• The writing does not hold the reader's attention.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are few events, actions, and/or ideas.• Details are scant.• The writing is confusing and/or frustrating for the reader.
INS	INSUFFICIENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student has written so little that it is not possible to assess the content.

Note: Content and Organization are weighted to be worth twice as much as the other categories.

Reporting Category: Organization

When marking **Organization** appropriate for Grade Level 3 writing, the marker should consider the

- beginning
- connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters
- ending

Meets the Standard of Excellence 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beginning captures the reader's attention, clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting, and provides direction for the writing.• Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are consistently maintained.• The ending ties events and/or actions together.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beginning clearly establishes events, characters, and/or setting and provides direction for the writing.• Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are maintained.• The ending provides an appropriate finish for events and/or actions.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beginning directly presents information about events, characters, and/or setting.• Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are generally maintained.• The ending is predictable and/or may be contrived but is connected to events and/or actions.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beginning may be confusing.• Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are unclear, missing, or inconsistent.• The ending is predictable and/or may be contrived.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The beginning provides little information.• Connections and/or relationships between events, actions, details, and/or characters are missing.• The ending, if present, is unconnected to the events and/or actions.
INS INSUFFICIENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Reporting Category: Sentence Structure

When marking **Sentence Structure** appropriate for Grade Level 3 writing, the marker should consider the

- degree to which standard sentence constructions are present and controlled
- presence of different sentence patterns and length

Meets the Standard of Excellence	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard sentence constructions are present throughout. Presentation is consistently controlled.• Sentence type and length are varied and effective.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard sentence constructions are present throughout. Presentation is controlled.• Sentence type and length are usually varied and effective.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard sentence constructions are present throughout.• Sentences may vary in length and type but are generally common constructions such as simple subordination or coordination with conjunctions (and, or).
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some thought units are standard sentences, but many are not.• Sentences, if present, are basic subject/verb constructions, without qualifiers.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thought units are difficult to recognize.
INS	INSUFFICIENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Reporting Category: Vocabulary

When marking **Vocabulary** appropriate for Grade Level 3 writing, the marker should consider the

- quality of words and expressions

Meets the Standard of Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words and expressions are lively and consistently precise and effective.
5	
Approaches the Standard of Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words and expressions are descriptive and generally specific and effective.
4	
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words and expressions are clear and are usually more general than specific.
3	
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words and expressions are simple and may be repetitive.
2	
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Words may be difficult to discern and indicate a lack of vocabulary for writing.
1	
INS INSUFFICIENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Reporting Category: Conventions

When marking **Conventions** appropriate for Grade Level 3 writing, the marker should consider

- end punctuation and capitalization
- spelling
- clarity

Meets the Standard of Excellence	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End punctuation and capitalization are correct.• Most words, familiar and unfamiliar, are spelled correctly; spelling errors are understandable “slips”.• Errors that are present do not affect the clarity or effectiveness of communication.• Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.
Approaches the Standard of Excellence	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End punctuation and capitalization are essentially correct.• Familiar words are spelled correctly; spelling errors are “slips”; unfamiliar words may be spelled phonetically.• Errors that are present do not affect the clarity of communication.• Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.
Clearly Meets the Acceptable Standard	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conventional end punctuation and capitalization are usually correct.• Many familiar words are spelled correctly; errors suggest uneven control of spelling rules; unfamiliar words are generally spelled phonetically.• Errors are sometimes intrusive and may affect the clarity of communication.• Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.
Does Not Clearly Meet the Acceptable Standard	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• End punctuation and capitalization, when present, are inconsistent.• Many familiar words are misspelled and/or spelled phonetically.• Errors interfere with the clarity of communication.• Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.
Clearly Below the Acceptable Standard	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is little, if any, evidence that the writer understands correct use of end punctuation and capitalization.• Words may be difficult to discern and are generally spelled phonetically.• Communication is not clear.• Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.
INS	INSUFFICIENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writing has been awarded an INS for Content.

Part B: Reading

Part B: Reading of the Grade 3 Language Arts Achievement Test consists of 40 multiple-choice questions based on reading selections from fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and visual media.

The reading blueprint on the following page shows the distribution of the sample questions. These questions illustrate the nature and complexity of those that will appear on the assessment, although the emphasis may be slightly different.

The reading blueprint for the June assessment is on page 23.

Development

Reading selections were chosen according to the following general guidelines:

- Reading selections, whenever possible, should be relatively short but should be

complete works containing a beginning, a middle, and an end.

- Reading selections should reflect the interests of the majority of Grade 3 students.
- Reading selections should be of appropriate difficulty for Grade 3 students.
- Canadian content should be used extensively.

The following considerations guided question development:

- Questions related to each reading selection should be arranged from specific to general, wherever practical.
- Questions should test the student's ability to understand and analyze the reading selections and to make judgements about their form and content. Only questions dealing with significant aspects of the reading selections should be asked.
- The assessment blueprint must support important learnings for Grade 3 students.

Reading Blueprint for Sample Questions

Reporting Category	Question Distribution by Language Function		Number of Questions	Percent of Test*
	Informational	Narrative/Poetic		
1. Understanding Main Ideas/Details The student should be able to identify key details and main ideas, differentiate between main and supporting characters, recognize character motivation and explicit relationships between events and characters, and categorize ideas.	3	1, 5	3	25
2. Organization of Ideas and Relationships between Form and Content The student should be able to identify genre (stories, poetry, plays, reports, and articles), organize features of story structure, use text and typographical features, recognize author's techniques, and determine an author's purpose.	10	2, 6, 12	4	33.5
3. Associating Meaning The student should be able to associate meanings of words, expressions, and literary devices from prior knowledge and contextual clues.	7	11	2	16.5
4. Synthesizing Ideas The student should be able to draw conclusions by relating what is known to new information, and assess the plausibility of ideas and situations in literature.	4, 8, 9		3	25
Number of Questions	6	6	12	100
Percent of Test	50	50	100	100

*Percentages are approximate and will vary according to the reading selections chosen.

Sample Questions

I. Read the following story and answer questions 1 and 2.

from STREGA NONA

Strega Nona was getting old, and she needed someone to help her keep her little house and garden, so she put up a sign in the town square.

Big Anthony, who didn't pay attention, went to see Strega Nona.

"Anthony," said Strega Nona, "you must sweep the house and wash the dishes. You must weed the garden and pick the vegetables. You must feed the goat and milk her. And you must fetch the water. For this, I will give you three coins and a place to sleep and food to eat."

"Oh, grazia," said Big Anthony.

"The one thing you must never do," said Strega Nona, "is touch the pasta pot. It is very valuable and I don't let anyone touch it!"

"Oh, si, yes," said Big Anthony.

Tomie de Paola

1. Two of Anthony's chores are to

- weed the garden and fetch the water
- vacuum the house and wash the dishes
- buy the food and feed the goat
- wash the dishes and cook the vegetables

2. The problem in this story is PROBABLY that Anthony will

- find a new job
- steal from Strega Nona
- touch the pasta pot
- not do his chores

II. Read the recipe below and answer questions 3 and 4.

POPULAR PLAY DOUGH

Ingredients:

*250 mL flour
75 mL salt
30 mL cream of tartar
250 mL water
10 mL food colouring*

Steps:

1. Mix first 3 ingredients in a medium-sized pot.
2. After mixing well, stir in water and food colouring.
3. Stir and cook for 3–5 minutes.
4. When the dough forms a ball, remove from the pot.
5. Cool for a few minutes and knead.
6. Store the dough in a tightly covered container.

3. The dough should be stored in

- the refrigerator 
- a tightly covered container
- the freezer
- a breadbox

4. The ingredients are heated after the

- first 3 ingredients are well blended
- dough forms a ball
- water and food colouring have been added
- dough is kneaded

III. Read the poem below and answer questions 5 and 6.

RAIN

I'm walking along being rained on
'Cause I lost my umbrella last year;
There's rain in my hair, rain everywhere.
There's a puddle in both of my ears.

It's running into my collar now,
It's trickling down my back;
My socks are soggy, my sneakers soaked,
I think I just heard myself quack.

My pants are shrinking, my jacket is too,
I'm sprouting scales like a fish;
I'm walking along being rained on
Squish. Squish. Squish.

5. The BEST word to describe this child is

- responsible
- kind
- lazy
- carefree

6. The underlined word everywhere is printed this way to show that

- there is a lot of rain
- the lines rhyme
- rain is falling from the sky
- the child is talking

IV. Read the following report and answer questions 7 and 8.

CATERPILLARS

The caterpillar's body is made up of 13 equal-sized sections known as segments. One segment includes the head.

While still small, the caterpillars keep close together as a protection against predators such as birds and other insects. One caterpillar is an easy target for predators, but a group looks like a large, inedible creature. As they grow larger, they will begin to spread out, clustering together again at night to keep warm.

The caterpillars eat and eat until all that remains of a leaf is a skeleton. They then spin a very fine web which hangs like a silken net from the remains of the leaf. As they crawl over this flimsy platform, they leave their waste droppings everywhere.

7. The underlined word segments means

- equals
- sections
- predators
- sizes

8. Caterpillars cluster together for

- food and energy
- protection and warmth
- warmth and food
- energy and protection

V. Read the table of contents below and answer questions 9 and 10.

NATURE STUDY: FROGS AND TOADS

Contents

Introducing Frogs and Toads	8
Where Frogs and Toads Live	12
The Life History of Frogs and Toads	20
Food and Feeding	30
How Frogs and Toads Fight Enemies	34
How to Keep Frogs and Toads	42
Glossary	45
Finding Out More	46
Index	47

Words that first appear
in bold in the text are
explained in the glossary.

9. What information about frogs and toads would PROBABLY be on page 34 of this book?

- What they eat
- How they protect themselves
- How long they live
- Where they live

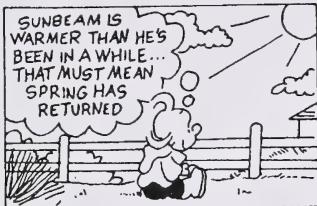
10. To find the meaning of a word in bold type in this book, a person would MOST LIKELY look it up in the

- dictionary
- encyclopedia
- glossary
- index

VI. Read the cartoon below and answer questions 11 and 12.

HI & LOIS

BY MORT WALKER & DIK BROWNE



11. The baby thinks that

- her family is going to have a party
- signs of fall are everywhere
- birds are making a nest
- backyard life is like a family

12. This cartoon was created by

- Hi and Lois
- Mort Walker and Dik Browne
- Mr. Bug
- family reunions

Key and Descriptors for Sample Questions

Question	Key	Language Function	Reporting Category	Curriculum Standard	Examples of Assessment Standard*
1	A	Narrative/poetic	Main Ideas/Details	identify key details	A
2	C	Narrative/poetic	Organization of Ideas	recognize features of a story	A
3	B	Informational	Main Ideas/Details	identify key details	A
4	C	Informational	Synthesizing Ideas	draw conclusions by relating what is known to new information	A
5	D	Narrative/poetic	Main Ideas/Details	recognize implicit relationships between events and characters	E
6	A	Narrative/poetic	Organization of Ideas	use typographical features for assistance	E
7	B	Informational	Associating Meaning	recognize word meanings	A
8	B	Informational	Synthesizing Ideas	summarize information related to a topic	A
9	B	Informational	Synthesizing Ideas	draw conclusions by relating what is known to new information	A
10	C	Informational	Organization of Ideas	use typographical features such as boldface	E
11	D	Narrative/poetic	Associating Meaning	recognize literary devices	E
12	B	Narrative/poetic	Organization of Ideas	use text features	A

*A—Students meeting the acceptable standard should be able to answer correctly questions such as these.

E—In addition to answering the questions identified for the acceptable standard, students meeting the standard of excellence should be able to correctly answer questions such as these.

Reading Blueprint: Grade 3 Language Arts Achievement Test

The blueprint for *Part B: Reading* shows the reporting categories and language function under which questions are classified, and indicates the number of questions in each category.

Reporting Category	Question Distribution by Language Function		Number of Questions	Percent of Test
	Informational	Narrative/Poetic		
1. Understanding Main Ideas/Details The student should be able to identify key details and main ideas, differentiate between main and supporting characters, recognize character motivation and explicit relationships between events and characters, and categorize ideas.	6	10	16	40
2. Organization of Ideas and Relationships between Form and Content The student should be able to identify genre (stories, poetry, plays, reports, and articles), organize features of story structure, use text and typographical features, recognize author's techniques, and determine an author's purpose.	2	5	7	17.5
3. Associating Meaning The student should be able to associate meanings of words, expressions, and literary devices from prior knowledge and contextual clues.		6	6	15
4. Synthesizing Ideas The student should be able to draw conclusions by relating what is known to new information, and assess the plausibility of ideas and situations in literature.	8	3	11	27.5
Number of Questions	16	24	40	100
Percent of Test	40	60	100	100

Performance-Based Component

In 1995, a provincial sample of Grade 3 students from across the province will be selected to participate in the performance-based assessment in language arts. This activity-based assessment, using actual books, addresses the learner expectations that are not easily measured on the other components of the assessment. The reading and writing activities involved in the assessment have been developed by teachers and are designed to assess a broader range of reading skills and to support classroom instruction.

Students will be asked to choose a book from a given selection and to respond to a series of open-ended questions. By engaging students in hands-on book reading and asking them to respond, we will obtain valuable information about how well students interact with text in order to make meaning.

In 1996, a performance-based component in mathematics will be administered to a provincial sample of Grade 3 students.

Learning Contexts Survey

Each year, learning context survey questionnaires will be given to a provincial sample of Grade 3 teachers and students. In 1995, the learning contexts survey will focus on the language arts program, and in 1996, it will focus on the mathematics program.

The purpose of the student questionnaire in language arts is to examine the extent to which important language learning attitudes are evident, to look at students' attitudes toward language arts, and to correlate these attitudes with achievement.

The purpose of the teacher questionnaire in Language Arts is to study the effect of classroom environment and instructional strategies on achievement.

Suggestions for Students

I strongly advocate preparing children to understand tests and testing through extensive class discussion about the makeup of the test and how to take it, and then adequate practice to find out their own particular weaknesses in approaching tests.

—Graves, p. 183

It is most important that instructional time be spent on the important learnings in Grade 3 Language Arts. Teachers may also wish to familiarize students with the format of both the machine-scorable and the written-response components of the assessment by having them work through the sample questions and writing assignment included in this bulletin.

The Student Evaluation Branch has published documents entitled *Samples of Students' Writing*, which came from the responses given on previous Grade 3 Language Arts achievement tests. Teachers may wish to share these samples with students and to familiarize students with the scoring criteria that appear in this bulletin.

We hope that teachers will share the following information with students to help them prepare for the Language Arts Assessment.

Part A: Writing

Have students:

Listen carefully to the instructions as they are read out loud and do what the assignment asks them to do. It is important for them to read over the instructions and think about what they will write.

Talk about their ideas. Students will have a chance to share their ideas with some of their classmates. They should remember, though, that each student is to write his/her own story. Sharing ideas is just to help them get started.

Plan their writing. Students should make a plan that helps them organize their ideas.

They may want to try a:

- list (characters, setting, etc.)
- chart (beginning, middle, ending)
- web

Think about some of the things that make good writing:

- using important ideas that make sense together
- including details or describing events, characters, and their actions
- organizing ideas in an order that makes sense
- using words and sentences that help the reader understand what you want to say

Check their work and make any changes right on their first draft.

Part B: Reading

Have students:

Read the material using the strategy that works best for them:

- a. Read the selection and think carefully about it before they try to answer the questions; or
- b. Read the questions first and then read the selection, remembering the questions they need to answer.

Read a selection more than once. It is all right for students to read a selection as many times as they need to in order to answer the questions. Remind them to go back to the reading selection before answering each question.

Make sure they look at all types of information given. Information may be given in words, pictures, cartoons, or charts.

Make sure they read carefully all four choices before choosing the answer they think is best. All of the answers might seem partly correct, but only one is the best answer. If they don't see a correct or **best** answer right away, encourage them to try to find two choices that make the most sense and choose one of them.

Credit

Donald H. Graves, *Build a Literate Classroom* (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1991), p. 183.

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